

Pure by lollercakes

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Summary:

She needs a lift. He doesn't know why her finding it elsewhere bothers him so much. Until he does.

Pure

“James Hopper,” Chrissy Carpenter calls to him from across the room, her blonde hair piled high upon her head as she stalked towards him. Joyce looks between Hopper and the girl he’d been infatuated with for months, biting her tongue as she took another deep pull on her beer while his eyebrows lifted slightly. She knew right then and there that she needed to start working on another ride home, the party starting to wind down and Hopper surely going to offer Chrissy the ride home sans Joyce instead.

Stepping away without a word, Joyce disappears into the shadows of the porch before heading back into the house to find someone who had a car. She could walk the distance home - it would definitely help with her sneaking in with a bit more sobriety under her belt - but her shoes just weren’t cut out for the long distance she would have to travel through the forest. No, a ride home was what she needed and she couldn’t count on Hop to come through for her now, not when he had the chance with his dream girl.

It didn’t take her long to track down Lonnie Byers leaning against the kitchen cupboards, his hair gelled back and his body relaxed as he regaled the seniors with his stories of debauchery now that he was out of school. She didn’t dislike Lonnie, per say, but she wasn’t sure if she trusted him fully. There was something about him, a sharp edge in his laugh or a glint in his eye that both excited and confused her. Joyce wasn’t sure which and tonight wasn’t the time to figure it out. She needed that ride and he had a car.

Sliding into the group, she made a point to accept another drink and shift until she was leaning against the counter next to him, her confidence coming out from under a haze of alcohol as she prompted him on just what he was doing at a highschool party.

“Well, Joyce, it looks like all the best looking girls in town are here. Where else would a smart guy like me be?” He laughed at his own line and Joyce smiled appreciatively, playing off of him and batting her eyes in the way she’d learned to get what she wants.

The next half hour went by in a blur, his lines getting more suggestive and her replies getting a lot more cagey. She realized as the clock started to tick closer to one in the morning that she needed to wrap up this flirtation or he was going to start to expect something she wasn’t prepared to give.

“Hey, Lonnie,” she ran her hand slowly up his arm, her lip between her teeth.

“Anything, babe,” he replied lowly, ducking his head to run his nose along her ear, his breaths hot on her neck as his arm wrapped around her waist. She could feel the kiss coming before it landed on her lips, his body pressing her into the counter until she was trapped.

And then all of a sudden she wasn’t.

Opening her eyes wide in shock, she looks up in her daze to see Hopper over top of Lonnie, his arm raised in a fist as the crowd gasps around them. Jolting into action, Joyce grabs onto Hopper’s arm and pulls until his large frame falls backwards and into the kitchen cupboards, his face red and angry as he kicks his foot into Lonnie’s ribs in a last ditch effort to lash out at him.

“What the fuck are you doing?” Joyce screams as she lets go of Hopper, his body twisting until he was on his knees.

“Joyce, are you okay?” He grunts as he pulls himself up to his full stature. Behind him on the floor Lonnie groans, the impact of Hopper’s fury having knocked him unconscious. Joyce looks between the two of them and slams her fists against Hopper’s chest angrily.

“I’m fucking perfect, Hop. What the hell did you do *that* for?” She growls as her hands push him back a step. He frowns and grabs at her wrists to calm her, confusion sparking within him.

“He was - “ Hopper pauses and looks around them quickly, the drunken gazes of the whole senior class trained on them and making his skin burn. He doesn’t want to have this conversation now. He’d be okay with it never happening. “Let’s take this outside and -”

“You think I’m just going to - “

“ *Joyce* ,” he pleads and she swallows her words, her throat dry as she recognizes the desperation in her friend’s eyes.

“You shouldn’t have done that,” she scolds and wraps her arms across her chest, stepping back and away from him. The feeling of everyone’s stares focusing in on them starts to sink into her frazzled mind and she does what she always does when she becomes the center of attention - she bolts like a rabbit.

Outside the house Joyce finds herself walking in the rain, the change in weather fitting for the way she was feeling as she starts her long walk home. With her evening ruined, she figures it was just peachy that the rain was like ice on her hot skin, coating her until her clothes stuck to her and made the situation even more miserable.

She was rounding the first street corner when vehicle lights crept up behind her and forced her into the mud on the shoulder of the road. Waving the truck forward, Joyce groans when it instead slows down beside her, the window jerking down mid-way before getting stuck.

“Leave me alone, Hop,” she shouts over the sound of the old engine, picking up her pace.

“Get in the truck, Joyce,” he returns, easing up beside her.

“Not going to happen. I’m never speaking to you again!”

“Come on. I promised I’d drive you home. I only had one beer all night because I said I’d drive you,” he calls through the crack of the window, his words just barely audible as she laughs bitterly.

“Get fucked.”

“Look, I’m sorry,” he shouts through the window, the truck creeping forward and alongside her. She throws him the bird, stepping further onto the shoulder until she can’t hear him over the pounding rain.

She wishes he would just drive off. That he'd go back and pickup Chrissy and this whole evening would just fucking end already. Angry, wet, and frustrated she stomps through the mud and tries to ignore the way it was starting to soak into her shoes and freeze her toes. So wrapped up in her own misery, she failed to notice that she was outpacing the truck lights until the darkness grew heavy around her. When Hopper's hand wraps around her wrist, surprise making her jump clear out of her skin at the contact, she realizes that he'd abandoned the truck behind them to run after her.

"I didn't mean to - " he starts, stops. The rain is wetting his sandy blonde hair and making it stick to his forehead, the water dripping into his eyes as he looks down at her. "I'm sorry."

"Do you even know what you're sorry for? You hate Lonnie, the two of you are always fighting over one bullshit thing or another," she accuses and steps back and away from him, stumbling and nearly falling into the mud before Hopper catches her around her waist.

"You're right. I don't like him. So when I saw him all over you I lost my mind," he admits low enough that she has to strain to hear him, even with the close proximity. "I didn't mean to embarrass you, Joyce. That was never my plan. I just wanted to - "

"What? You just wanted to wha - " She's cut off by his mouth covering hers, his fingers squeezing her hips almost painfully as he holds her to him. When he breaks away it's to catch his breath, his chest heaving as she stares wide-eyed at him, rain dripping into her eyes.

She doesn't know what to say, how to act, where to look. She stays frozen in place, mouth agape and her breaths shallow as she tries to put the pieces together. This was not what she expected from him - they were friends, friends didn't kiss each other - and now he'd gone and showed his hand and she didn't know what he wanted from her.

"Would you please come get in the truck?" He asks as a hand snakes up to cup her cheek, his blue eyes piercing hers.

"But I'm soaked now," she whispers absently, her gaze searching.

"Pretty sure I am too," he laughs and steals another quick kiss before tugging her towards the passenger side and opening the door for her. He helps her up and runs around to the driver's seat, sliding in beside her and resting his hand on the gear shift. "Joyce," he says her name and it sounds different than usual, softer, and she isn't sure if it's all in her head or if something has actually shifted between them. She looks over at him then, guarded, and he smiles at her with his whole being until she's crawling up next to him and grabbing his chin in her hands.

His five-o'clock shadow scrapes against her palms as she slips back into her seat, staring at him as the rain pounds on the roof of the cab. Time slows and something hums between them as Hopper shifts the truck into drive, pulling away from the curb as he steals glances towards her.

She turns up the radio when he skips the turn towards her street, spinning the dial on the heat to full blast as the music fills the air around them. Unsure of what to say, she leans against the dash and watches the wipers move back and forth, measuring the weight of words unsaid between them.

This was new territory and though she was sobering up quickly, she hesitated to say anything and ruin whatever was going on between them. Joyce didn't hate the idea of her and Hopper together, she knew that, but in reality she didn't know how it would work. She wasn't his type. He liked blonde and fit - she was neither. They argued about everything (though they rarely took any of it personally). He was outgoing and personable and she was... Joyce. People knew her but few knew her well and Hopper was the exception, rather than the rule, to her measure of popularity.

"What are you thinking about Joy?" Hopper asks between the lull of the music, his driving more aimless as the time slips by.

She turns to him then, elbow on the dash and chin in her palm. "About what this means for tomorrow," she admits quietly, her eyes trained on him. The look she watches bloom over his face makes her insides flutter, his eyes shifting to hers every chance he gets.

"Does it have to mean anything in particular? Or can it just be something we figure out?" He pauses at a stoplight and takes the chance to look at her then, *really* look, and he doesn't frown or realize her shortcomings.

"I just," she looks back out the window as the light turns green, surprised when he doesn't advance the car forward. Not like it would matter, since it was nearly two in the morning, but still. She looks back at him with a small smile on her lips. "Where are we going?" Joyce diverts her thoughts from the reality she was going to bring up, instead choosing to play tonight off as an adventure. Tomorrow could wait.

“Well, I wasn’t really thinking of anything in particular. Figured I would just drive around until you got tired of me or something,” he shrugs and lets his foot off the brake once again.

“I’ve known you for almost nineteen years now Hop, don’t think I’ll be getting tired of you anytime soon,” she adds softly and moves until she’s perched on the middle of the bench, waiting patiently for him to lift his arm and pull her against him. When he does, when it feels like this is where she’s always belonged, she tucks her head against his neck and breathes him in.

They drive until she can’t stay awake, her body succumbing to the remnants of alcohol lacing through her system and the heat from the vents and from Hopper’s warm embrace. Later, when she wakes she’s confused about where she is until she realizes that she’s spread out across Hopper’s chest, his arm wrapped around her as he leans against the driver’s side door, snoring lightly.

“Hop,” she whispers, trying not to startle him. She runs a hand across his cheek as he squints his eyes open, the early morning light starting to fade in around them.

“It wasn’t a dream then,” he mumbles, his hand reaching up and wrapping around hers. Joyce smiles and rests her head against his chest, the comforting beat of his heart vibrating through her.

“Nope. But my mom is going to kill me if I’m not home soon.”

“Yeah, yeah. Let me just enjoy this before we have to leave this bubble.” He chuckles as he brings her hand to his lips, their eyes

closing at the contact. "Hey Joy," he murmurs after a drawn out moment, his gaze trained on her.

"Yeah?" She tilts her head until her chin is on his ribcage, eyes locked on him.

"You think, maybe, that," he pauses and closes his eyes like he's gathering his strength. When he opens them again he's shaking his head and shifting until she's forced off of him and onto the bench once more. "Nevermind," he mutters and the loss of his body heat only emphasizes the loss of *him*.

"No, what were you going to say?" She throws out her hand as he reaches to put his keys in the ignition, stopping him halfway. The look he gives her then burns through her and straight to the crux between her legs, her cheeks flushing.

Time stops. Their breathing stops. And the world seems to disappear from around them until she takes a chance, jumps off a cliff, and leans in until her lips are meeting his, her body pressing against him.

It catches him off guard, though it was inevitable in its own way, and she uses the advantage of his shock to deepen the kiss. He catches on quickly though, hands sliding to her hips and helping her rub against him, his length hard between them.

"Is this - " Hopper starts between nips along her collar.

“Okay?” She finishes for him as her hands pull at his shirt.

“Yeah? I mean, yes from me,” he fumbles the words and pulls back, pausing until she looks at him with clarity, a brisk nod exchanged between them. “Thank god. I’ve wanted this for so fucking long,” he hisses as she pulls off her shirt, his fingers ripping open a condom as she moves to work off his jeans.

“Really?” She laughs but cuts it short when he springs free of his pants, his full length making her breath catch. “Really,” she repeats, though this time it means something wholly different.

“I mean - it’s not - “ he trips over the words before looking up at her shyly, uncertainty shifting across his features.

“No, it’s good,” she whispers and runs her hand along the length, revelling in the sound of his broken inhale. Taking the condom from him, she sheaths him carefully and grins at the twitch of his hips into her palm. Never one to lose the upper hand, Hopper pulls her grip off of him before sliding her underwear aside and slipping his fingers along her slit, his digits filling her and making her keen into his shoulder as he moves his lips to her chest.

“Dammit, Joyce,” he groans as she rocks into his hand, his teeth biting at her nipple through her bra. The moans she emits go straight to his dick, the heat of her intoxicating him as she forces herself closer.

“Hop,” she grounds out as his thumb works her nub, her body starting to shake as her mouth latches onto the vein in his neck.

“Okay?” He asks once more, just to be sure.

“Mmhmm,” she sighs into his skin, hips lifting and falling against his hand. She nearly sobs when he pulls his hand away, the loss of his touch nearly killing her until he thrusts himself into her, his length stretching as she comes apart around him.

He forces himself to stay still as she comes down from her high, her heart pounding in her chest while he pants through the need to come with every clench of her orgasm. When the wave seems to slow, that’s when he starts to move within her, his hands biting into the bruises he’d left on her the night before as he pushes up and into her.

She tries to help but the feel of him inside her, of the jerk of his hips, makes her brain turn to mush and all she can do is meet his thrusts and run her hands everywhere she can get them. It doesn’t take long before she’s climbing to her peak again, her own hand rubbing between them then until he’s crying out against her, his movements erratic as he empties himself on a final push.

She’s so close, so high on him, that all it takes to bring her over the edge is his muttered, “Fuck, Joyce,” and she’s falling to pieces again, her body vibrating and burning up inside.

It takes minutes - hours - days - before she recovers enough to climb off of him, their hands gentle as they help right each other’s clothing once again.

“What - “ Joyce starts once she’s caught her breath.

“Don’t - don’t ask what it means. Let’s just see what happens,” Hopper begs as he looks at her carefully, eyes searching.

She swallows her words and leans towards him. “Just don’t forget about me outside the bubble, okay?” She whispers it tightly before ghosting her lips over his.

“I could never forget about you, Joy,” he replies honestly and runs his hand through her hair before pulling her back to him.